1/3/71

Dear Arthur,

Your card, addressed to the home we left 3½ years ago, reminds me how outof touch we have been. Even though your Miss Schneider was here a year and a half ago.

It has been years since we've been able to take time for sending cards, something we used to enjoy almost as much as getting them from friend from whom for so long in so many cases we had not heard.

I've kept plugging away, aging and wearying at an accellerated pace, but the work has been fruitful. I do not recall what I had in limited editions at the time we were last in touch, but I've done two of a projected three parts of POST MORTEM and hope to do the third soon, two parts of my largest work, titled COUP D'ETAT. The edited-down second part will appear commercially this year, under the imprint of a very small publisher, under the title FRAME-UP. That part deals entirely with the King/ Ray case. It is a definitive work, detailing what the title says and the decay of a sick society as its basic institutions crumble and are rotted by its protectors. And, I've researched major parts of other books.

I've moved the subject into the courts, under the "Freedom of Information" law, % U.S.C. 552. The odds are much against me, especially because in most cases I'll have a fool for a client, but there seems to be no choice if either we are to discover and achieve a degree of acceptability for truth or make society work as it is supposed to. Because of the inherent threat in such suits, I have obtained more that I have shown you of what was withheld from the Commission itself, in both documents and pictures. With a different subject, or in an earlier part of our history, this, in the words of one so-very-wrong editor, would have made me "rich and famous". I'm still neither.

In fact, the opposite is so true that right now I face a major problem. The first declassification of what was withheld (often a euphemism for suppression) is completed and are available. I've gotten about 40 of them automatically, where I'd pushed so long and so hard I guess the government figured they'd better abide by their regulations with these subjects. It includes significant, story-book-like information. If I can ever get to New York and we can both have the same evening free, in the words of the younger folk, I'll blow your mind. I should be up for a while when the new book appears. I have what the kids call an available "pad", but the time I can stay will be restricted by my wife's need for daily transportation. Often it can be improvised. But the $6.00 round trip in cabs is beyond out capacity, we are that badly off.

Getting back to what is now released, I plan trips to Washington beginning in the morning, to make an inventory of this material. I presume you will want it, to go with that gibberish called the list of basic materials that you have (which is entirely incomplete to begin with). I now have only a list of numbers that are, in themselves, without significance or meaning. I'd like to be able to order every formerly-withheld page, on the general assumption that there had to be at least a scent of a reason for withholding it to begin with. There is no doubt much was to avoid embarrassment to the government and its predetermined conclusions. I already have some of this. There is also no doubt some of it still should not have been released, it is of that personal and defamatory a nature. This latter category might make a fascinating sub-archive for yours, for it will be a special kind of study of the times and the people and their behavior and that of the officials. As you may remember from my earlier writing, I have scrupulously eliminated names and identifications of all those in any way defamed when I found the documents relevant. They made much of this kind of stuff immediately available. I can explain that no better than I can explain the declassification of what should not have been. Thentotal extent of all of this material I will not know until I complete the inventory, and when I can do that I do not know. I'd like to be able to do it in a single week of work, but there the transportation costs alone will be a considerable drain on our flimsy account, with the quarterly interest payment due in less than two weeks (we have it and about nothing else). My guess is that

there may be 2,000 or more pages, each costing 10¢ per copy (but second copies can be made commercially for less, from 4-6¢ now in DC). If you can help, I'd much appreciate it.

By the way, the extent of my files that are in files is now six cabinets. Among the things included is what I think is the best reflectiln of popular reaction and attitudes, something scholars of the future will find a socially-valuable commentary, in tiself the kind of thing that can be important.

My wife has our only regular income of the year for three months beginning tomorrow. She is a tax consultant for Blocks. This means that during this period she'll not be able to retype any manuscripts. But it also means that if the litigation doesn't keep me tied down, I should be able to turn another book out. I've got the two I want most to do completely researched.

Fortunately, I have no paper shortage, neither of the kind you've supplied for the "finished" draft or for the rough draft. I've just been given a whole case of out-of-date Ozalid paper, which is what I'm using now. That is fine for rough drafts, with one exceptionL when I get to writing, I wish paper came in rolls. I hate to stop even to put new sheets in, and I write that rapidly. I hate even more to make a carbon, which I should, particularly because I use the used carbons after my wife rejects them. If your company is one that makes the paper with the built-in carbon, regardless of what kind or color of thickness or size, and you can spare some, that would be quite helpful in the saving of "creative" time and in helping me keep my thoughts in mind.

Here I make a confession. Usually before I start writing my work is so well orgabized in my mind that I have no outline, not even notes, on paper. It is all (as I suspect too often shows) off the top of the head. I do not brag about this (even though few writers can do it, for it would be better if I took the time for a good outline). But the choice is not doing something else, and with the enormity of the chunk I've bitten off, every thing I do means something else I don't do. With the unpopularity of the subject, I long ago cast myself in the unhappy role of the man who stays broke and makes the historical record.

By the way, if you can supply this paper, and it comes with different numbers of sheets, and there is no great cost difference, I'd prefer the three-sheet set, if that is made. One would be the original (and that can also be tissue), one the carbon I'd keep for rough corrections, and one would be a copy I could circulate among others researching in the field for their comments, suggestions for additions, perhaps questioning of fact. Unlike what others may have been popularizing, I do, dilogently, seek adverse comment on my work, and I've not printed a book of which this wasn't true. I've done the same with the limited editions, and have the suggestions noted with the master copies, so that if they get printed or them remian no more than an historical record, it is all together.

I ramble and I'm tired. We've been snowed in and I have bursitis and I've been up since 4 a.m. I close with a confession of disappointment, that those with the greatest means, who are always those with the greatest stake in any society, have not "turned on", not done what in a county they alone can do to make the kind of work I (close to alone) do possible. I don't mind using second-hand paper, worn-out carbons, giving up all the pleasures others get out of life, for what I do has meaning, to me and, I believe, to the country and its future. What I do mind is not being able to make phone calls when I should, not being able to but xeroxes of records at 10¢ each, not being able to afford either the gas or the parking-charges when I go to Washington, in short, not being able to afford the minimal needs of the work I've undertaken, work that by now, as any credit check will show, cannot be called selfish. I have, infrequently, splurged, and I trust you to preserve my confidence onthis: I have color pictures of some of what was withheld of the medical evidence (two with the President's blood on them, I hate to say). I've shown this to but one person. And I have a better copy of the Zapruder film than the Archives, together with fine technical work done with it that the FBI ever dreamed of doing. It is so clear that I have a 14" blowup of the fatal shot (which the Commission also printed, but less clearly). This work gives a new dimension to that precious film. Strange LIFE never did it! Need I tell you what this will be worth in the less-restrictive future, to scholars? Gotta quit. Have a good year and don't be embarrassed if you feel you must turn down my requests. Sincerely,